

after much work he finished the leaves according to the pattern.

When he finished this the master brought him another just like it, and told him to cut a branch in it. And so for weeks he worked on these big rough stones; and he did not know what they were for.

One day when he was walking down town in the large city, he saw a beautiful building. He went over to look at it, and there, in the front of that large building were all those big rough stones upon which he had been working for so long. But they were all put together now to form a most beautiful picture. The man looked at it a long time, and then said:

"O how glad I am I did it well! Now I see what the master meant."

And so it should be with us. No matter what work is given you to do, be sure you do it well.

## The Christian Life

### Somehow or Other

Life has a burden for every man's shoulder;

None may escape from its trouble and care.

Miss it in youth and 'twill come when we're older,

And fit us as close as the garments we wear.

Sorrow comes into our lives uninvited,

Robbing our hearts of their treasures of song;

Lovers grow cold, and long friendships are slighted,

Yet, somehow or other, we worry along!

Everyday toil is everyday blessing,

Though poverty's cottage and crust we may share;

Weak is the back on which burdens are pressing,

But stout is the heart that is strengthened by prayer.

Somehow or other, the pathway grows brighter

Just when we mourn there are none to befriend;

Hope in the heart makes the burden seem lighter,

And, somehow or other, we get to the end.

—Selected.

### Special Messages from God

William E. Gladstone.

Who doubts that, times without number, particular portions of the Scripture find their way to the human soul as if embassies from on high, each with its own commission of comfort, of guidance, or of warning? What crisis, what trouble, what perplexity of life has failed, or can fail, to draw from this inexhaustible treasure house its proper supply? What profession, what position is not daily and hourly enriched by these words which repetition never weakens, which carry with them now, as in the days of their first utterance, the freshness of youth and immortality? When the solitary student opens all his heart to drink them in, they will reward his toil, and in forms yet more hidden and withdrawn, in the retirement of the chamber, in the stillness of the night season, upon the bed of sickness, and in the face of death, the Bible will be there, its several words how often winged with their several messages, to heal and to soothe, to uplift and uphold, to invigorate and stir. Nay, more, perhaps, than this; amid the crowds of the court, or the forum, or the street, or the market place, where every thought of every soul seems to be set on the excitements of ambition, or of business, or of pleasure, there, too, even

there, the still small voice of the Holy Bible will be heard, and the soul, aided by some blessed word, may find wings like a dove, may flee away and be at rest.

### Repeating Jesus

Zion's Herald.

There is taking larger, fuller possession of the Christian church, it seems to us, this thought—that if we are properly to claim the name of Christian, if we are to count ourselves Christ's men, we must make it our one absorbing aim to do, not precisely the very things he did when here on earth—for his closest disciples did not do that; and no two persons, however similar in their circumstances or temperaments, were ever meant to be exactly alike or to do exactly the same things—but the things, so far as we can ascertain them, which he would do now if he were here in our place. We must try to repeat Jesus for the benefit of the present generation, to repeat him with such modifications and adaptations as our day demands and as our different callings make necessary. We are "to walk even as he walked," copying his example, following his steps, and being, in the words of St. Paul, "imitators of God, as beloved children."

### Our Rock of Refuge

Christian Standard.

We need a shelter in the storms of life, a place where we can flee in all times of danger. In Jesus we have a perfect refuge. He is the cleft rock. In him sorrows are allayed, temptations are resisted, trials are successfully borne, and fears are banished. Bereavements are softened, and even death loses its sting to him who hides in Jesus.

The rock of Gibraltar has successfully withstood the winds and waves of many centuries. What though the winds of heaven beat upon it, and the waves of the sea lash them into fury, still the old fortress stands, the coveted prize of jealous nations.

Jesus is the Christian's Gibraltar. All the bitterness of his enemies, fiery criticisms, and unrelenting persecutions, have recoiled upon themselves. The gates of hell can not prevail against him. Heaven be praised for such a refuge! Here alone is lasting peace.

"A sense o'er all my soul imprest  
That I am weak yet not unblest,  
Since in me, round me, everywhere,  
Eternal strength and wisdom are."

### The Day-dawn of the Soul

Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

Morning begins with the swing of the earth into the first glimmering rays of light from the sun. Spiritual light begins with the first approaches of the soul to Jesus Christ. All true converts are alike in two respects: they were once in the darkness of depravity and unbelief; their day-dawn began with the penitent turning of the heart to the Savior. The Holy Spirit drew them, and they moved Christward. Conversions have been very numerous lately, but no two persons have had exactly the same experience. With one person the first step was

into an inquiry room. With another person it was the reopening of a long-neglected Bible, or a betaking himself to honest prayer. A third began with a resolution of total abstinence from the decanter, for Jesus Christ cannot dwell in a soul that is drowned in drink. With thousands the first step is the banishment of some besetting sin; and as the sin went out the light broke in. No seeker after salvation ever finds peace until he has renounced his favorite sins, and done it in order to obey Christ. Obedience to Jesus Christ is the test of conversion.

Some people are consciously converted suddenly. They can fix the hour and the place, and all the attendant circumstances of their new birth. They can point to the very arrow of truth that pierced the heart, and to the precise sermon or prayer or conscientious act that brought the healing balm. With the majority of Christians I feel quite confident that their experience in conversion is literally like the daybreak. A faint gleam of thoughtfulness grew into earnestness, grew into penitence, and enlarged into a fuller, deeper sense of the soul's need of Christ; then, as the soul came on toward Jesus, the ruddier hues of hope appeared, and some flushes of joy kindled up; and the soul discovers that the night of unbelief has ended and the day-dawn has begun. "I have come to the conclusion," said a very intelligent Christian lady to her pastor, "that it is best for me that I have never yet been able to fix the exact time of my conversion; I am afraid that I should trust too much to it if I could. Now I trust to nothing but continued faith and to living in happy fellowship with my Savior."

Too many new converts are apt to think that the dawn is enough, that they have reached a certain desired point, and need only to remain there. As well might our globe pause in its diurnal motion when a faint streak of morning light is reached, instead of rolling on into the perfect day. Conversion is not a point of termination; it is a point of new departure. It is a start, not a journey. No one has a right to say, "Now I trust that I am converted; the work is done; I am saved, and I need only to join the church and ride on toward heaven." This wretched mistake has dwarfed many a church member for life. They never outgrow their babyhood. Infancy is very beautiful in its place; but it must not last too long. I am charmed with the bright prattle of our little grandson who is playing with his toys and "choo-choo railroad cars" in yonder nursery; but that same lively prattle ten years hence would not be so pleasant. "When I was a child I spoke as a child," said the great apostle, "but now I have put away childish things." The first timid, brief, and rather incoherent prayer of a new convert in a social meeting is very delightful. It is music to the pastor's ears, and perhaps to the ears of angels likewise. Yet we should not be satisfied to hear the same prayer from him after ten years of sound Christian experience. Even Paul, a quarter of a century